Employment and hours worked rose in July

Media Release

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Source: Labour Force, Australia, July 2020

Seasonally adjusted employment increased by 114,700 people between June and July, and hours worked increased 1.3 per cent, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Bjorn Jarvis, head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said: "The July figures indicate that employment had recovered by 343,000 people and hours worked had also recovered 5.5 per cent since May. Employment remained over half a million people lower than seen in March, while hours worked remained 5.5 per cent lower. "

The monthly increase in employment in July was underpinned by a larger increase in part-time employment (71,200 people) than full-time employment (43,500 people). Overall, the percentage of people employed in Australia increased 0.5 percentage points to 59.8 per cent, up from a low of 58.2 per cent in May.

Hours worked rose 1.3 per cent in July, and increased more for females (2.3 per cent) than males (0.6 per cent). Hours worked for females were around 4.9 per cent below March, compared to 5.9 per cent for males.

The participation rate increased 0.6 percentage points in July, and the unemployment rate increased slightly to 7.5 per cent.

"The number of unemployed people rose by nearly 16,000 between June and July. For the first time there were more than one million people out of work, available to work and actively looking for work", said Bjorn Jarvis.

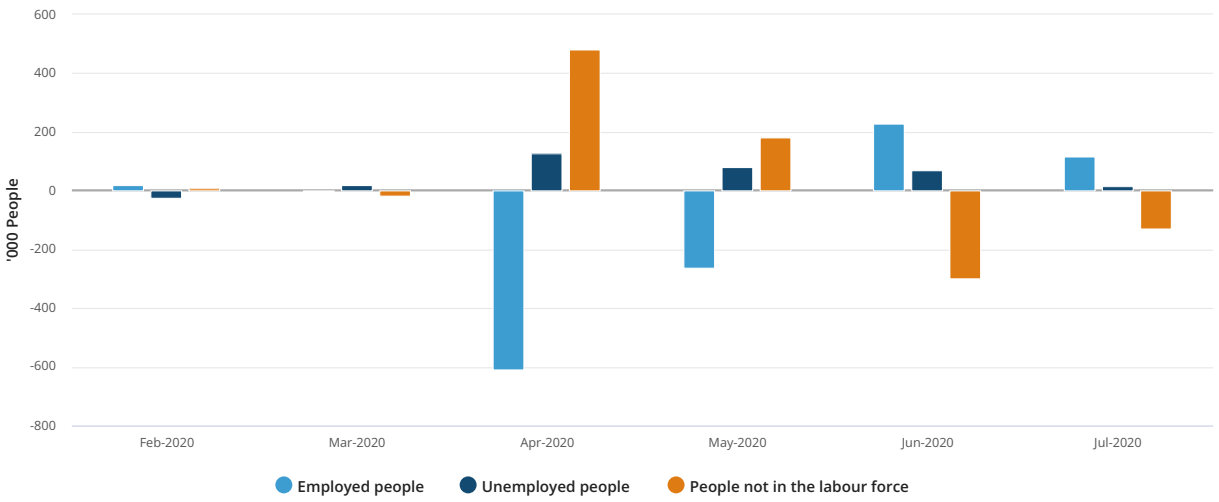
The underemployment rate decreased by 0.5 percentage points, to 11.2 per cent, but remained 2.4 percentage points above March.

The underutilisation rate, which combines the unemployment and underemployment rates,

fell 0.4 percentage points to 18.7 per cent, but remained 4.7 percentage points higher than March.

"The July data provides insight into the Australian labour market during Stage 3 restrictions in Victoria. The August Labour Force data will provide the first indication of the impact of Stage 4 restrictions." Mr Jarvis said.

Chart 1 - monthly changes in key labour force populations



Today's release includes additional analysis of hours worked, including for those people working zero hours. It also contains information on alternative approaches being used to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on unemployment and job loss since March, including how to calculate the composite Commonwealth Treasury measure (referred to as the "effective unemployment rate"), and comparisons with US and Canadian data.

More details are in the July 2020 issue of Labour Force, Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0) (cat. no. 6202.0). Further information, including regional labour market information, will be available in the upcoming July 2020 issue of Labour

Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/6291.0.55.001) (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001), due for release on 20 August 2020.

The ABS would like to thank Australians for their continued support in responding to our surveys during such a difficult time.

Media notes

- People in the Labour Force are either employed, or unemployed. In order to be unemployed, people must be actively looking for work, and available to start work during the reference week.
- The ABS has suspended publishing trend series for the COVID-19 period.
- Further information on additional labour market statistics can be found in 'Measuring the labour market impacts of COVID-19'; part of the suite of information available on the ABS website (https://www.abs.gov.au/covid19) .
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